



# Aldershot Child Care Centre

**Aldershot Child Care Centre**

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## **PARENT HANDBOOK FOR ALDERSHOT CHILDCARE CENTRE**

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## **Aldershot Child Care Centre would like to welcome you and your family to our centre.**

Aldershot Child Care Centre is a federally incorporated Charity, offering your child an enriching childcare experience that focuses on the development of the whole child. We currently offer daycare programs for children ages 6 months-6 years. We are inspected and licensed annually by the Ministry of Education in accordance with the Health and Fire Departments. Aldershot Child Care Centre is governed by volunteer Board of Directors. The day-to-day operations are managed by the Operations Director. The centre is staffed by Registered Early Childhood Educators and Early Childhood Assistants. This handbook provides an outline of how our Centre runs and our most important policies. Our centre provides childcare services to families in Burlington and surrounding communities. The Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system will support quality, accessibility, affordability and inclusivity in early learning licensed child care serving eligible children. As of November 2022, Aldershot Child Care Centre Inc. is officially enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care. (CWELCC) System. As well, Aldershot *Child Care Centre*, participates in Halton Region's Quality Engagement Cycle. This cycle is a requirement for all operators to demonstrate their commitment to the Quality System Framework. This includes, but is not limited to, on-site visits and meetings with regional staff, completing and submitting required data and documentation within mandatory timelines, collaborative goal setting, and developing and implementing action plans. This handbook has been designed to help you better understand our Centre's organization, policies, procedures and goals. We ask that you take the time to read through it carefully. If you have any questions after reading this handbook, please contact the Operation Director.

The Operations Director will be happy to discuss your concerns and answer questions to insure a pleasant childcare experience for all.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION**

**Monday- Friday 7:30 A.M – 6:00 P.M**

**Please Note: Late fees will be charged after 6:00 P.M (including inclement weather days)**

## **Our Program Statement**

### **Our Vision**

Aldershot Child Care Centre views all children as competent, capable, curious and rich in potential. We believe our program offers children endless opportunities to take the lead in their learning by allowing each child the freedom to explore.

We believe in supporting the development of children and providing a safe, healthy and caring learning community in which they can grow and meet their full potential.

### **Our Values**

We understand that families are a child's first teacher. Our educators play an important role in supporting families by caring for their children and supplementing their growth, development and well-being in a comfortable, home-like, safe, and secure environment.

As parents, you know your child's strengths and abilities best. Working together, we can build an environment that helps your child grow and learn. This "family-centered" approach is encouraged through our open-door policy.

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### **Health and Well-being**

We provide children with a safe and secure learning environment where each child feels comfortable to explore and build confidence through play-based learning, inquiry, and provocations throughout the day.

A child's individual needs for rest and play are considered and respected throughout the day. The outdoor learning environment provides extended opportunities for gross motor development, social learning, and nature exploration.

Our educators connect with the children, ensure safe environments, extend play, reflect on successes, document learning and communicate regularly with families.

We believe nutrition supports physical health and emotional stability. For this reason, we partner with **Real Food for Real Kids**, providing meals and snacks that exceed Canada's Food Guide recommendations while carefully accommodating allergies and restrictions.

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## **Building Positive Relationships**

Building positive relationships with caring and trusting adults is an important step in a child's social and emotional development. Educators support children's learning by asking open-ended questions, offering choices, expanding ideas, and providing materials to extend thoughts and suggestions.

We view educators as competent and responsible leaders who model respectful, inclusive, and empathetic interactions. Staff meet regularly with the Operations Director to ensure alignment with our program philosophy and Ministry standards.

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## **Relationships with Families and Community Partners**

We value partnerships with families and community agencies. Our goal is to ensure families feel confident and connected in our program. We maintain open communication through reports, photos, information boards, emails, and meetings.

We collaborate with **Children's Inclusion Services, Halton Region**, and other community partners to provide access to early intervention and inclusion supports.

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## **Play-Based Emergent Curriculum**

Aldershot Child Care Centre embraces **play-based emergent curriculum**, which builds on children's natural curiosity. Educators observe children's interests and design learning experiences that reflect them.

We follow the guiding frameworks of:

- *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years*
- *Early Learning for Every Child Today (ELECT)*
- *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)*

Through play, inquiry, and reflection, educators nurture each child’s belonging, well-being, engagement, and expression — the four foundations of HDLH.

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### **Child-initiated and Adult-supported Experiences**

Our educators capture children’s learning and development through visible records known as curriculum documentation. This can be in the form of written notes, photographs, videos and children’s work. Documentation displayed in the classrooms and throughout the centre showcases the learning process and makes it visible for educators, families and children. These visual cues allow educators and children to discuss and reflect on learning. It provides insight from different points of view and plan and adjust curriculum accordingly. Our curriculum focuses on play-based learning, allowing the child to take the lead and then focusing on his or her interest to develop learning experiences. When this approach to learning takes place, along with the educator’s support, the child’s competence and potential are maximized. We encourage our Educators to take opportunities to ask the children open ended questions and engage discussion that expands their curiosity, learning and interests. Our Educators will set up the room with a variety of activities and materials that support the observed interests of the children.

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### **Inclusion and Equity**

We are committed to equitable access and inclusion for all children and families. Every child has the right to participate in our program to their fullest ability. We work with families and resource consultants to create **Individual Support Plans (ISPs)** as needed, in alignment with the Ministry’s Inclusion and Accessibility expectations.

We celebrate diversity in culture, language, ability, and identity. Materials and activities reflect the diverse backgrounds of the children and families in our care.

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### **Prohibited Practices**

In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA), O. Reg. 137/15, Section 48, the following practices are strictly always prohibited:

- Corporal punishment of the child.
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a highchair, car seat, stroller, or other device for discipline or in place of supervision — *unless* the restraint is to prevent a child from hurting themselves or others, used only as a last resort, and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
- Locking exits of the childcare centre or confining a child in any room or area without adult supervision — *except* during an emergency, and only as required by the centre’s emergency management policies and procedures.
- Use of harsh, degrading, or threatening measures, or the use of derogatory language directed at or in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame, frighten, or undermine the child’s self-respect, dignity, or self-worth.
- Depriving a child of basic needs, including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding.
- Inflicting bodily harm on a child in any way, including making a child eat or drink against their will.

In the event that management observes or becomes aware of a staff member using a practice not supported by Aldershot Child Care Centre, the situation will be addressed immediately in accordance with the Behaviour Guidance Policy and Disciplinary Policy.

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### Supporting Staff in Professional Learning

Our educators are reflective practitioners and lifelong learners. We encourage and financially support professional development aligned with the **College of Early Childhood Educators’ Code of Ethics** and the **Continuous Professional Learning (CPL)** program.

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### Continuous Program Evaluation

The Program Statement is reviewed **annually** by the Operations Director, staff, and the Board of Directors, and in consultation with families. Updates are made as needed to ensure our practices continue to meet Ministry of Education requirements and reflect current pedagogical research.

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### Our Philosophy

Our philosophy is to provide a supportive and educational environment for children 3 months to 6 years of age that fosters emotional, social, intellectual, and physical development. We strive to provide a



supportive environment for parents and caregivers through respectful partnership, open communication, and shared goals for each child's well-being and success.

## **ENROLLMENT POLICIES**

### **Program Offerings and Enrolment**

Aldershot Child Care Centre offers the following childcare programs: FULL TIME ENROLLMENTS ONLY

- **Infant Care:** for children **6 months to 18 months**
- **Toddler Care:** for children **18 months to 31 months**
- **Preschool Care:** for children **31 months to 6 years**

Enrolment in any of the above programs is open to all children within the stated age limits, provided the program can meet the individual needs of the child.

Enrolment is granted without discrimination based on gender, race, creed, religion, political belief, or disability.

**Parents are required to submit a completed registration form prior to their child's start date.**

A child's space will be **officially secured once the registration form has been submitted to the office and confirmed with the signature of the Centre Manager or designated staff member.**

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### **Fees (After CWELCC)**

#### **Base Fees**

- Infant, Toddler, and Preschool Programs: \$22.00 per day (after CWELCC reduction)

All program fees are determined in accordance with the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system. Any future adjustments will comply with Ministry of Education guidelines.

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### **Payment Methods**

- Fees are collected through pre-authorized debit (PAD) or credit card monthly.
  - Payments are processed automatically on the scheduled date indicated on your invoice.
  - Please ensure payment details are kept current to avoid interruption of childcare services.
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### **Tax Receipts**

- Families will receive an official annual tax receipt for all child care fees paid during the calendar year.
  - Receipts are issued before April 1st of the following year.
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### **Non-Base Fees and Exclusions**

Please note that the daily childcare fee does not include:

- Field trips, special events, or extracurricular programs
  - Families are responsible for providing an adequate supply of diapers, pull-ups, and wipes for their child. If a child runs out of these supplies while attending the centre, the centre may provide diapers, pull-ups, or wipes on a temporary, as-needed basis to ensure the child's health, safety, and comfort. A replacement fee may be charged only for items supplied by the centre in these circumstances. This fee is intended to recover the cost of the emergency supplies provided and does not apply when families have provided their child's required supplies
  - NSF (non-sufficient funds) or declined payment fees
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### **NSF and Outstanding Payment Policy**

- A 10% late payment fee will be applied if payment is not received by the due date indicated on the invoice.
  - Accounts that remain outstanding beyond two (2) weeks may result in temporary suspension from the program until fees are paid in full.
  - Accounts outstanding beyond thirty (30) days may result in termination of care and referral to a third-party collections agency.
  - Any NSF or declined payments are subject to an additional administrative fee.
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## Fee Review and Adjustments

Aldershot Child Care Centre follows the Ministry of Education's CWELCC funding and fee guidelines. If at any time the Centre is removed from the CWELCC program, or if there are changes to funding or Ministry guidelines, parents will be notified in writing prior to any changes taking effect.

### Refunding of Fees

The Board will review each case and circumstance of potential refund or credit. Potential refunds will be approved or denied on a case-by-case basis.

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## Closures

Aldershot Child Care Centre is closed on the following statutory and seasonal holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Civic Holiday
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day
- New Year's Eve

Regular program fees still apply for all statutory and scheduled closure days, as fees are based reflective to your child's fulltime enrolment rather than daily attendance.

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### Non-Scheduled Closures:

Occasionally, the Centre may close for reasons such as:

- **Professional Development (PD) Days** for staff training and Ministry-mandated workshops

- **Severe weather conditions or emergency situations** (e.g., power outages, unsafe travel conditions)
- **Maintenance or health and safety requirements**
- **Closures aligning with Halton School Board decisions** (if applicable)

Families will be notified **well in advance** of any planned non-scheduled closure and as soon as possible in the event of an emergency closure.

Regular program fees are charged on non-scheduled (unplanned) closure days (ex. days for staff training and Ministry-mandated workshops, severe weather conditions, or emergency situations (e.g., power outages, unsafe travel conditions), maintenance or health and safety)

**The Aldershot Child Care Centre will be closed from December 21<sup>st</sup> to January 1st following HDSB Winter Break/ Christmas Holidays.** Parents are **responsible for statutory and seasonal holiday fees** during this period. This policy may be reviewed and adjusted in the future.

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### **Custody Arrangements**

If you have a legal agreement outlining custody or restraining arrangements, please provide the Centre with a copy for our records. Our Centres will only abide by what is outlined in the custody arrangement. Parents/guardians are kindly requested to notify the Centre Director immediately if these legal circumstances change.

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## **Termination and Withdrawal Policy**

### **Withdrawal by Parents/Guardians**

Families who wish to withdraw their child from Aldershot Child Care Centre must provide a **minimum of 30 days' written notice** to the **Centre Supervisor or Operations Director**.

- Written notice must be submitted at least **30 calendar days prior** to the child's final day of care.
- Families are responsible for payment of all fees during the 30-day notice period, **regardless of whether the child attends** during that time.
- The notice period allows the Centre to plan for staffing, licensing ratios, and waitlist management.

## Termination of Care by the Centre

Aldershot Child Care Centre reserves the right to **terminate childcare services without notice** under circumstances that compromise the safety, well-being, or operational integrity of the program.

Immediate termination may occur if:

- A child's behaviour poses a consistent safety risk to themselves, other children, or staff, and all reasonable intervention strategies have been exhausted.
- A parent/guardian's conduct (verbal, physical, or written) threatens the safety, well-being, or respect of staff, children, or families. Signs acknowledging this zero tolerance abuse policy will be posted at several places in the Centre.
- There is repeated non-compliance with the Centre's operational policies, payment requirements, or Ministry regulations.
- False or incomplete information has been provided that affects the child's care or safety.

The Centre will make every effort to communicate concerns with families and work collaboratively toward resolution before terminating care, **except in cases where immediate termination is necessary for safety reasons.**

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## Documentation and Record Keeping

All withdrawal or termination notices will be documented in the child's file. The Centre will maintain these records in compliance with the **Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)** and the **Ministry of Education's Child Care Licensing Manual**.

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## Vacations/Illness

Full monthly fees are required irrespective of days missed for vacations, illness, PD Day or statutory holidays. The fee covers both actual care and the guaranteed space. Credit will not be given for any missed days.

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## **Late Pick-Up Fee Policy (Non-Base Fee)**

Aldershot Child Care Centre closes promptly at **6:00 p.m.** each day. To support consistent operations, licensing requirements, and respect for our educators' scheduled hours, all children must be picked up and have exited the Centre by **6:00 p.m.**

Late pick-up is not a regular program option and should only occur in exceptional circumstances. When a child remains at the Centre beyond closing time, additional staffing support is required, and it may impact educators who have completed their scheduled work hours.

### **Late Pick-Up Fees**

Families who pick up their child(ren) after **6:00 p.m.** will be charged a late pick-up fee as follows:

- A **\$20.00 initial late pick-up fee** will be charged immediately upon arrival after the Centre's closing time.
- An additional **\$10.00 fee will be applied for every five (5) minutes** the child remains at the Centre after 6:00 p.m.
- A fee of **\$1.00 per minute thereafter** will continue until the child has been signed out and has exited the Centre.

Late fees are calculated based on the actual time the child remains in care after closing and apply regardless of whether the delay is due to traffic, weather, work commitments, or other personal circumstances.

### **Payment of Late Fees**

Families are required to sign the **Late Pick-Up Acknowledgment Form** upon arrival when picking up after closing time.

Late fees:

- Must be paid directly to the educator who remained beyond their scheduled hours.
- Must be settled promptly to maintain the family account in good standing.

### **Repeated Late Pick-Ups and Non-Compliance**

After **three (3) occurrences** of late pick-up, the Centre Supervisor will arrange a meeting with the family to review attendance expectations and discuss strategies to support timely pick-up.

Failure to comply with the Centre's late pick-up expectations, including repeated late arrivals, unpaid late fees, or ongoing disregard for the policy, may result in further administrative action.

**Three (3) documented instances of non-compliance with the Late Pick-Up Policy may result in termination of care and cancellation of the child's enrolment at Aldershot Child Care Centre.**

Families are encouraged to plan sufficient travel time to arrive before closing, collect their child(ren), and exit the building by **6:00 p.m.** Thank you for helping us maintain a respectful and predictable environment for children, families, and educators.

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### **Morning Drop-Off**

The Centre opens at **7:30 a.m.** and **children cannot be accepted before this time** under any circumstance. Staff are not permitted to accept responsibility for children prior to the official opening hour.

For detailed expectations and procedures, please refer to the **Safe Arrival and Pick-Up Policy** in this handbook.

### **Waitlist Policy**

Aldershot Child Care Centre maintains a **waitlist** for families seeking full-time licensed childcare at our Centre. The waitlist process ensures **fair, transparent, and equitable access** to available program spaces in accordance with the **Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)** and the **Ministry of Education Child Care Licensing Manual**.

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### **Waitlist Placement**

- Families can register their child directly through our website at [www.aldershotchildcare.com](http://www.aldershotchildcare.com) by completing the **Waitlist Registration Form** with all required information.
  - Each family will be recorded in the waitlist system based on the **date the request was received** and the **child's age group**.
  - The Centre will contact families when a suitable space becomes available in the appropriate program.
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### **Priority for Placement**

Aldershot Child Care Centre maintains both an **internal** and **external** waitlist. Priority for available spaces will be given in the following order:

**Internal families** — children who are currently enrolled and their siblings.

Aldershot Child Care Centre follows a **first-come, first-served** process for all families on the waitlist, in accordance with Ministry of Education requirements for fairness and transparency.

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### **Notification of Space Availability**

- When a space becomes available, families will be contacted by phone or email in the order they appear on the waitlist.
  - Families must confirm acceptance of the space within the timeframe provided by the Centre.
  - If a family declines a space, they may remain on the waitlist unless they request removal.
  - If the Centre is unable to reach a family after **three (3) contact attempts**, the space will be offered to the next family on the list.
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### **Transparency and Confidentiality**

- Families may request information about their **waitlist status** at any time by contacting the Centre.
  - The waitlist is maintained **confidentially** — only general placement information will be shared with families, not the specific names or details of others.
  - The waitlist is reviewed and updated regularly to ensure accuracy and compliance with Ministry standards.
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### **Annual Review**

This Waitlist Policy is reviewed **annually** by the Centre Supervisor and Operations Director to ensure continued alignment with the **Ministry of Education's requirements** and **CCEYA regulations**.

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## **Beginning Your Journey at Aldershot Child Care Centre**



Aldershot Child Care Centre warmly welcomes all new families as they begin their journey with us. We believe that open communication, smooth transitions, and familiarity with our environment help children and families feel secure, confident, and excited about their start.

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### Orientation, Tours, and Transitions

- Families are welcome to schedule a **centre tour** during operational hours (**7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.**) to explore our facility, which includes:
    - Five classrooms (**one Infant, two Toddler, and two Preschool**)
    - A **gymnasium** and **outdoor play area** designed for active learning and gross motor play.
  - Tours are hosted by the **Operations Director, Centre Supervisor**, or their **Designate**. Families are encouraged to ask questions, share information about their child, and discuss any specific needs or concerns during the visit.
  - To schedule a tour, families may contact the Operations Director by email at [contact@aldershotchildcare.com](mailto:contact@aldershotchildcare.com), [nicole@aldershotchildcare.com](mailto:nicole@aldershotchildcare.com), or by phone. Appointments are arranged at a mutually convenient time.
  - Prior to the child's first day, families may also schedule a **short virtual (Zoom) meeting** with their child's educators to get to know them better, share information about their child, and support a smooth and positive transition.
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### What to Bring on Your Child's First Day

| Category         | Items Required                                                               | Notes                                                      |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Footwear         | Indoor shoes (to remain at the Centre);<br>Outdoor shoes or boots (seasonal) | Clearly labeled with child's name                          |
| Clothing         | Extra set(s) of clothing appropriate for the weather                         | Include hats, mittens, jackets, and sun hats as applicable |
| Rest Time        | Blanket and comfort item (if needed)                                         | Laundered weekly by the Centre                             |
| Hygiene          | Diapers, wipes, diaper cream, sunscreen, lip balm, lotion (if applicable)    | Must be <b>labeled</b>                                     |
| Personal Items   | Family photo (optional), labeled water bottle                                | Water bottles go home daily for cleaning                   |
| Infant Items (in | Formula, bottles, baby food (if applicable),                                 | All must be labeled and provided                           |

| Category           | Items Required      | Notes                         |
|--------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| addition to above) | soother, sleep sack | with parent's written consent |

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### Important Reminders

- **No toys from home**, unless for a scheduled *Show and Tell* day.
  - **No outside food** is permitted for Toddler and Preschool programs.
    - Exceptions apply only for **Infant meals or formula**, with written parental consent.
  - The Centre provides catered meals and snacks through **Real Food for Real Kids (RFRK)**, which accommodates allergies and dietary restrictions.
  - If your child requires medication, parents must complete a **Medication Authorization Form**, and all medications must have a **doctor's prescription label** with the child's name, dosage, and instructions.
  - All personal belongings must be **clearly labeled** with your child's name.
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### Our Commitment

We are committed to supporting each family's transition with care and open communication. Our educators and management team are always available to answer questions and ensure a positive start to your child's early learning experience.

## Health & Wellness

### Immunization Requirements

Aldershot Child Care Centre is required to maintain up-to-date immunization records for all children in accordance with the **Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)** and **Halton Region Public Health**.

Parents/guardians must provide proof of current immunizations before their child's start date and update the Centre with any changes.

Families who choose not to immunize must complete a **Ministry-approved exemption form**:

- **Medical Exemption:** A *Statement of Medical Exemption Form* completed by a licensed physician.
- **Religious or Philosophical Exemption:** A *Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief Form* notarized by a Commissioner for Taking Affidavits.

During an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, unimmunized children may be temporarily excluded from the Centre as directed by Halton Region Public Health until the outbreak is declared over.

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## Health, Illness, and Exclusion Policy

To ensure the health and safety of all children and staff, Aldershot Child Care Centre follows **Halton Region Public Health** and **Ministry of Education** guidelines regarding illness, exclusion, and communicable diseases.

**Children must be well enough to fully participate** in daily activities both indoors and outdoors. If a child becomes ill, families must keep them home until they are symptom-free and able to return safely.

### Exclusion guidelines include (but are not limited to):

- **Fever:** Exclude until fever-free for **24 hours without fever-reducing medication**.
  - **Vomiting/Diarrhea (Gastroenteritis):** Exclude for **at least 48 hours after the last episode**.
  - **COVID-19 or Respiratory Symptoms (RSV, Flu, etc.):** Exclude as per the latest **Halton Region Public Health** direction (usually until symptom-free for 24 hours and able to participate).
  - **Communicable diseases** such as chickenpox, hand-foot-and-mouth, conjunctivitis, strep throat, impetigo, ringworm, or lice require exclusion according to public health direction.
  - Parents must notify the Centre immediately if their child is diagnosed with any communicable disease.
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## Outbreak Management and Communicable Disease Control

### If an outbreak is declared:

- Aldershot Child Care Centre will notify **Halton Region Public Health** immediately and follow all required reporting and outbreak management procedures.
- Parents will be informed in writing (via email or communication platform) of the outbreak details and any precautions required.

- Enhanced cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfection of all toys, surfaces, and high-touch areas will be implemented.
- Additional health screening, hand hygiene, and isolation procedures will be enforced during the outbreak period.
- The Centre may adjust programming, restrict group sizes, or temporarily close a classroom if directed by Public Health.

#### **Parents/Guardians must:**

- Keep children home if they are exhibiting any symptoms of illness.
- Follow exclusion timelines and provide medical clearance if required by Public Health.
- Notify the Centre immediately if a communicable disease has been diagnosed.
- Cooperate with Centre requests for information (e.g., symptom tracking, contact tracing) during an outbreak.

Once Public Health determines the outbreak is resolved, the Centre will notify families that regular operations have resumed.

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#### **On-Site Illness Procedure**

If a child becomes ill while attending the Centre:

1. The child will be separated from the group in a supervised, comfortable area.
2. The parent/guardian will be contacted immediately for prompt pick-up.
3. Staff will wear appropriate protective gear (e.g., gloves, mask) as needed.
4. The area and materials used will be cleaned and disinfected after use.
5. The child may return once symptoms have resolved and exclusion criteria are met.

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#### **Preventive Health Practices**

- **Daily HEALTH CHECKS** are conducted at drop-off.
- Frequent handwashing is encouraged for children and staff.
- Toys, equipment, and linens are cleaned and disinfected daily or as needed.
- Good ventilation and safe food-handling procedures are always maintained.

- Parents will receive ongoing health updates through communication platform.

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### Reporting Absences and Illness

- If your child will be **absent**, please notify the Centre **no later than 10:00 a.m.**
  - If your child is **ill**, please inform us of:
    - The **nature of the illness**, especially if it is contagious.
    - Any **symptoms** your child is experiencing (e.g., fever, vomiting, rash).
  - Families must follow Aldershot Child Care Centre's **Sick Policy** and **Public Health** guidance for exclusion and return-to-care.
  - The Centre will report any suspected or confirmed communicable diseases to **Halton Region Public Health** as required by law.
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### Illness and Exclusion Table

| Illness / Condition                 | Symptoms / Indicators                                                                | Parent Responsibilities                                                                                        | Centre Responsibilities                                                             |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fever                               | Temperature of 38°C (100.4°F) or higher.                                             | Keep child home until fever-free for 24 hours without medication and be able to participate in daily routines. | Contact parents to pick-up.                                                         |
| Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFM) | Blisters on hands, feet, or mouth; possible fever; excessive drooling or open sores. | Exclude if child has open sores or excessive drooling. May return once sores are dry and child feels well.     | Notify families of possible exposure; disinfect toys, surfaces, and sleeping areas. |

|                                              |                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Common Cold                                  | Runny nose, cough, mild fatigue, no fever.                                                                                                     | May attend if symptoms are mild and child can participate indoors and outdoors. Keep home if symptoms worsen and if child is not participating well. | Encourage handwashing and cough etiquette. Inform parents and follow policy.                                         |
| Pink Eye (Bacterial)                         | Thick yellow/green discharge, Crusted eyelids, especially in morning, Red, swollen eyes, usually one eye first                                 | May return after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.                                                                                                   | Disinfect all bedding, toys, and shared materials.                                                                   |
| Pink Eye (Viral)                             | Watery discharge, Red, irritated eyes, often with cold or sore throat, Spreads easily to both eyes                                             | May return when eye discharge resolves or when decided by physician.                                                                                 | Disinfect all bedding, toys, and shared materials.                                                                   |
| Gastroenteritis (Vomiting / Diarrhea)        | 1 or more episode of Vomit<br>2 or more episodes of Diarrhea                                                                                   | Keep child home for 48 hours of medication free after the last episode and ensure they can tolerate food and liquids.                                | Monitor for multiple cases; notify Public Health if an outbreak is suspected.                                        |
| Strep Throat / Tonsillitis                   | Sore throat, fever, swollen glands.                                                                                                            | Exclude 24 hours after starting antibiotics and once child feels well.                                                                               | Report confirmed cases to Public Health if required.                                                                 |
| Rashes (Ringworm / Impetigo)                 | Visible red patches, blisters, or ring-shaped rash.                                                                                            | Exclude until treatment has begun and rash can be covered.                                                                                           | Clean and disinfect all surfaces and shared materials. NO water plays until treatment has been completed.            |
| <b>Illness / Condition</b>                   | <b>Symptoms / Indicators</b>                                                                                                                   | <b>Parent Responsibilities</b>                                                                                                                       | <b>Centre Responsibilities</b>                                                                                       |
| Chickenpox                                   | Rash, fever, tiredness.                                                                                                                        | May return 5 days after the rash started or until lesions have crusted over, whichever comes first.                                                  | Report immediately to Public Health ; notify families of exposure.                                                   |
| / Measles / Mumps / Rubella (German Measles) | <b>Measles:</b> Fever, cough, runny nose, red eyes, rash starting on face → body.<br><b>Mumps:</b> Swollen cheeks/jaw, fever, headache, muscle | Measles- may return 4 days after rash appeared<br>Mumps- may return 5 days after the swollen glands first appeared                                   | notify public health immediately, isolate symptomatic individuals, , inform families, and follow cleaning and health |

|                             |                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                             | pain.<br><b>Rubella:</b> Mild fever, rash on face → body, swollen lymph nodes. | Rubella- May return 7 days after onset of rash                                                                                                                                | protocols.                                                                                                              |
| Influenza / COVID-19        | Cough, fever, fatigue, breathing difficulty.                                   | Covid 19- Follow Public Health guidance; keep home until symptom-free for 24 hours.<br><br>Influenza- may return when child well enough to participate in regular activities. | Implement outbreak measures and inform families of updates.                                                             |
| Head Lice                   | Itchy scalp, visible lice or eggs (nits).                                      | Exclude until treated and no live lice remain.<br><br>May return after treatment has been completed.                                                                          | notify families, maintain confidentiality, advise treatment before return, and clean/disinfect shared items and linens. |
| Injury / Accident           | Bruises, cuts, or bumps.                                                       | Parents will be contacted immediately for serious injuries and sign an incident report.                                                                                       | Provide first aid and complete documentation, call 911 if needed or directed by parents.                                |
| Other Communicable Diseases | As identified by Public Health (e.g., pertussis, norovirus, Tuberculosis).     | Follow exclusion guidance as advised by Public Health.                                                                                                                        | Comply with Public Health reporting and cleaning protocols.                                                             |

## **Hygiene Policy**

Aldershot Child Care Centre is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and hygienic environment for all children, staff, and families. The Centre follows all hygiene and sanitation practices in accordance with the **Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)** and **Halton Region Public Health** standards.

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### **Handwashing Practices**

The Centre strictly enforces proper handwashing procedures for all children and staff throughout the day. Children are required to **wash and dry their hands**:

- Upon arrival at the Centre
- Before and after meals or snacks
- After using the toilet or having their diaper changed
- After wiping or blowing their nose
- After outdoor play
- After messy or sensory activities
- Before and after handling food or drink

Educators support and supervise children to ensure proper technique using soap, running water, and individual paper towels or air dryers.

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### **Personal Care Products**

To ensure child safety and prevent allergic or skin reactions, all **personal care products** — such as **diaper creams, sunscreen, lotions, lip balm, or any topical application products** — must:

- Be **clearly labeled** with the child's full name
- Be **new/unopened** upon first submission
- Have a **visible and valid expiry date** and **DIN number**
- Be accompanied by a **signed parental consent form** authorizing the use of each specific product

Aldershot Child Care Centre **will not apply any product** to a child without **written parental consent**.

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### **Sunscreen Policy**

Parents are responsible for applying sunscreen to their child **before arriving at the centre each morning**. Aldershot Child Care Centre will reapply sunscreen as needed throughout the day, following outdoor play schedules and weather conditions.

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### **General Hygiene Practices**



The Centre ensures:

- Routine cleaning and sanitizing of all toys, equipment, and high-touch surfaces
  - Regular laundering of bedding and soft items
  - Use of gloves and proper hand hygiene during diapering or contact with bodily fluids
  - Adherence to all infection-prevention protocols recommended by Public Health
- 

## **Medication and Anaphylaxis Policy**

### **Purpose**

Aldershot Child Care Centre is committed to ensuring the **health, safety, and inclusion** of all children requiring medication or diagnosed with a medical condition, including allergies and anaphylaxis.

This policy complies with the **Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)**, **Ministry of Education Licensing Standards**, and **Halton Region Public Health** guidelines.

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### **Medication Administration**

- The Centre **does not administer any medication** without:
  - A **doctor's prescription label** on the **original container** (not on the box), or
  - A **signed doctor's note** clearly stating the child's **full name, medication name, dosage, administration time, purpose, and expiry date**.
- Medication must be:
  - In its **original pharmacy container**.
  - **Labeled** with the child's name, dosage, storage instructions, doctor's name, and expiry date.
  - **Accompanied by a completed medication authorization form**, signed by the parent or guardian.
- **No over-the-counter medication** (e.g., Advil, Tylenol, cough syrup) will be accepted unless accompanied by a **doctor's prescription or note**.
- **Temporary medications** (e.g., antibiotics) must be taken home **daily** at pick-up.

- **Staff will not discard any medication.** Parents must take expired or empty medications home to dispose of safely.
- 

## Parent Responsibilities

- Provide the Centre with up-to-date medication **before the expiry date.**
- Replace expired medication **at least one month before expiry** (reminders are sent by staff approximately two months prior).
- Submit all medication in **original packaging** with a **valid label** and **current consent form.**
- Ensure medication is **replaced immediately** if it is lost, expired, or damaged.
- Understand that **children cannot attend** if required medication (such as EpiPens, inhalers, etc.) is missing or expired, as it is a **health and safety non-compliance.**

## Allergies, Medical Conditions, and Special Dietary Requirements Policy

Aldershot Child Care Centre is committed to providing a **safe and inclusive environment** for all children, particularly those with allergies, medical conditions, or special dietary needs. This policy is established in accordance with the **Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)** and **Halton Region Public Health** standards.

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## Individual Medical and Allergy Plans

- Every child with a diagnosed medical condition or allergy must have an **Individual Medical/Anaphylaxis Plan** completed **before their first day of attendance.**
  - The plan includes the child's **photo, allergy or condition details, symptoms, emergency response steps, and treatment instructions**, and is signed by both the parent/guardian, the child's Medical Practitioner, and the Operations Director. Each staff member will be trained on the Individual Plan and will sign their acknowledgment to procedure.
  - All plans are **posted visually** in each classroom, kitchen, and other relevant program areas for staff reference.
  - A **master logistics list** of all children's allergies and medical needs will be posted and maintained in each licensed room for daily awareness and compliance.
-

## Staff Training and Compliance

- All educators and staff review every child's medical and allergy plan **before beginning work in the classroom**.
  - Annual **Anaphylaxis and Medical Emergency training** is mandatory for all employees, including recognition of allergic reactions, administration of EpiPens, and response protocols.
  - The Centre ensures that staff understand cross-contamination prevention and safe handling of all food, sensory, and craft materials.
  - A **Certified Food Handler** is always present in the Centre to oversee food safety, storage, and allergy compliance procedures.
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## Food, Nutrition, and Dietary Accommodations

- Aldershot Child Care Centre partners with **Real Food for Real Kids (RFRK)** to provide nutritious, balanced meals and snacks.
  - All meals are prepared in a **nut-free facility**, and the Centre is a **peanut- nut-free environment**.
  - Each child's meal is **individually labeled** according to their dietary restrictions and food preferences.
  - For children with **food allergies, sensitivities, or cultural dietary needs**, the Centre will make every effort to provide substitutions that meet those needs.
    - If a child's diet cannot be fully accommodated by the Centre, parents may be requested to **supply meals or snacks**.
    - Such arrangements require **written consent and clear dietary instructions** signed by the parent/guardian and Operations Director / designate
    - All outside food must be **labeled with the child's full name** and remain **stored in the staff-designated area** to prevent cross-contact.
- 

## Use of Food and Materials in Activities

- Food, craft, and sensory materials are carefully reviewed to ensure they do not contain ingredients or substances that pose a risk to any child with a known allergy.
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## Infant Feeding and Formula

- Families providing **formula, breast milk, or infant food** must ensure:
    - Each original container or bottle is **clearly labeled** with the child's full name, date, and content.
    - All items are **fresh, sealed, and within expiry date**.
    - A **written feeding consent form** is completed and signed by the parent/guardian authorizing staff to serve and handle the provided food or formula.
  - Staff follow all safe storage and heating procedures as outlined by Public Health and Ministry standards.
- 

## Celebrations and Special Occasions

- **No homemade food items** are permitted for birthdays or celebrations.
  - Families wishing to share treats or food must provide **store-bought, unopened, and clearly labeled items** listing all ingredients and potential allergens.
  - Items must be **peanut- nut-free** and handed directly to staff for safe storage and distribution.
  - All celebratory foods are kept **away from children's reach** until served under supervision.
  - Parents must consult the Operations Director of designate prior to bringing any food items to ensure allergy safety and compliance.
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## Meal Schedule

AM Snack – 7:30 am – 9:00 am

Lunch – 11:30 am – 12:00 pm

PM Snack: 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm

- The Centre **does not provide additional snacks or meals outside of the scheduled mealtimes**, except in the case of a **late pick-up** or **extended care due to extenuating circumstances**.
- In such cases, staff may offer **a light snack or drink** if the child remains in care after regular hours.
- Families are encouraged to ensure their child arrives on time for meals and snacks to maintain a consistent routine and prevent disruptions.

- Children who arrive after mealtimes may need to wait until the next scheduled snack or meal period.

### **Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy**

Aldershot Child Care Centre is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of every child in our care. This policy outlines the procedures for safe arrival and dismissal of children, in compliance with the Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA) and Ministry of Education guidelines.

### **Hours of Operation**

Monday to Friday: 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Drop-off window: 7:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.

Pick-up window: Anytime before 6:00 p.m.

### **Safe arrival procedures:**

1. Children are not permitted to arrive at a program site unattended. Parents/ guardians must accompany their children to their classroom when arriving at the centre.
2. Parents/guardians must inform the program staff of their child will be absent or arriving late to the program. Staff will record this information in the classroom's daily logbook and document the confirmed absence in the classroom attendance.
3. Upon a child's arrival into the program, staff must:
  - Ensure the child's time of arrival is documented in the classroom attendance.
  - If the parent/guardian indicates that someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking up the child, confirm the person is listed in the child's file as an emergency contact and has written authorization to pick up.
  - If the person is not listed, have the parent/guardian provide authorization in writing (i.e., a written note or an email)
4. If a child does not arrive in the program as expected, the parent/ guardian has not confirmed the child's absence
  - In a full day nursery school program, staff will, at their first opportunity, attempt to contact the parent/guardian by phone. If unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff will leave a voicemail message, if possible and document the attempt to contact the parent in the classroom daily logbook.
  - In before and after school programs, staff will notify the school personnel of the child's absence from the morning program and record the absence in the classroom attendance.

- In after school programs, staff confirm with school personnel if the child was present during the school day. If the child was present during the school day, staff will attempt to reach the parent/guardian by phone. If unable to reach the parent/guardian by phone, staff will take additional steps as outlined in Aldershot Childcare Centre's missing child procedures.

## **SAFE DISMISSAL PROCEDURES:**

1. Children will only be released to their parents/guardians unless written authorization has been provided allowing for other individual to pick up their child.
2. If the staff does not recognize the person picking up the child, they must confirm with another staff member if the person is the child's parent/guardian or authorized individual. If another staff member is unable to confirm, staff must request photo identification to confirm the person is listed as an authorized individual in the child's file.
3. If a parent/ guardian is unable to pick up their child before the program closes, it is their responsibility to inform staff and arrange for another authorized individual to pick up their child.
4. If the program has closed and the child has not been picked up, staff will call the parent/guardian. If unable to reach the parent guardian, staff will then call the child's emergency contacts.
5. If unable to connect with either the parent/guardian or the emergency contacts, staff will contact the program supervisor/ director to determine next steps as per Aldershot Lateness Policy.

During any late pick-up, staff must notify the Supervisor immediately. If the Supervisor is not on-site, staff will follow the written procedures outlined in the policy, including contacting parents, emergency contacts, and following all Ministry-compliant safety steps.

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## **Arrival and Dismissal Summary**

| Category          | Safe Arrival                                          | Safe Dismissal                                                       |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Time Window       | 7:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.                                | Until 6:00 p.m.                                                      |
| Late Procedure    | After 10:00 a.m. – child not accepted without notice. | After 6:00 p.m. – Late fees applies.                                 |
| Emergency Contact | Parent → Emergency Contact → Voice message to both    | Parent → Emergency Contact → Voice message to both → CAS Call 6:30pm |
| Double Drop-Offs  | Not permitted once picked up.                         | Not applicable.                                                      |

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## **Releasing Your Child Policy**

Aldershot Child Care Centre places the utmost importance on ensuring each child's safe release from care.

- Children will **only be released** to individuals listed on the child's **authorized pick-up or emergency contact list**.
- If an **alternate person** (not listed) is coming to **pick up or drop off** the child, parents or guardians **must notify the centre staff in advance** with the person's **full name**.
- The authorized individual **must provide valid government-issued photo identification** (e.g., driver's license, passport) before the child will be released.
- Staff will verify the ID and cross-check with the parent's written authorization **before releasing the child**.
- If a person arrives without prior notification or valid ID, **the child will not be released** until contact is made with the parent/guardian for confirmation.
- If the person attempting to pick up the child appears **unauthorized, impaired, or unsafe**, the child will **not be released**, and the **Director or Supervisor will contact the parent or emergency contact** immediately.
- In situations where the child's safety may be at risk, **Halton CAS and/or local authorities will be contacted** immediately in accordance with Ministry guidelines.

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## **Policies**

### **Field Trips and Community Walks Policy**

Aldershot Child Care Centre participates in community walks and short field trips within walking distance, such as nearby parks, libraries, and neighbourhood walks. These activities take place during regular outdoor time, typically in the morning, and always with appropriate staff-to-child ratios. Staff must complete a **field trip form** before leaving the premises, including destination details, approved by Designate. Families consent will be obtained for community walks as required by the Ministry of Education.

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### **Photography and Video Policy**

Photographs and videos are taken **only for educational and documentation purposes** and are uploaded exclusively through the **communication app**.

Aldershot Child Care Centre **does not use any social media platforms** for posting children's photos. Group and individual photos are taken **only with written parental consent**.

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### **Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest Policy**

All personal and family information is **confidential**. Staff, students, and volunteers are strictly prohibited from sharing, discussing, or disclosing any information about children, families, or operations outside of the Centre.

Staff are required to **avoid any conflicts of interest**, including relationships or actions that could compromise professional judgment. Any potential conflicts must be reported to the Operations Director immediately.

To maintain professionalism and clear boundaries, **current staff are not permitted to provide childcare services** (babysitting, caregiving, etc.) for **currently or previously enrolled families** outside of the centre.

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### **Suspected Medical Conditions and Duty to Report**

Staff will monitor children daily for signs of illness or unusual symptoms. If a child exhibits symptoms that may indicate a medical condition, parents will be notified immediately.

Under the **Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)**, all educators are **legally obligated to report** any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the **Children's Aid Society (CAS)**. Failure to report is a violation of provincial law.

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## **Serious Occurrence Reporting**

Aldershot Childcare reports all serious occurrences, as defined by the Child Care and Early Years Act, to the Ministry of Education within 24 hours of the incident. These include:

- A life -threatening injury to or illness of a childcare centre.
- An unplanned disruption to the normal operations of the childcare centre.
- A missing or temporarily unsupervised child
- An allegation of abuse or neglect of a child while receiving care.
- A death of a child who receives care.

When a serious occurrence report is submitted, a Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted on Centre Licensing Board for 10 Business Days.

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### **Professional Conduct and Escalation of Concerns**



All staff are expected to act with professionalism, respect, and courtesy toward children, families, and colleagues.

If a parent or guardian has a concern or complaint, they are encouraged to first speak with the classroom educator. If unresolved, concerns may be brought to the **Operations Director** verbally, in writing or through the communication app.

All issues will be addressed within **48 hours**, either through a written response or a meeting to discuss the matter.

For serious unresolved issues, parents may contact the **Ministry of Education** or **Halton Region Children's Services** for support.

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### **Smoking and Vaping Policy**

Aldershot Child Care Centre maintains a **strict smoke-free and vape-free environment**. Smoking or vaping is **not permitted** inside the Centre, playground, or within **20 meters** of the building entrance or outdoor play areas, as per Ontario's **Smoke-Free Ontario Act**.

This applies to all staff, families, visitors, and volunteers always.

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### **Emergency Management Policy**

Aldershot has developed emergency, management policy and procedure that all staff, students and volunteers must review prior to starting in the programming. In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation of the centre, children will be escorted to near by emergency evacuation site. This place of shelter has been approved by the ministry of education and will provide a safe place for the children while awaiting pick up , parents will contact by phone or email and arrangements must be made, to have your child picked up as soon as possible. Please ensure Aldershot has your current contact information all the time.

In the event of an emergency that doesn't require an evacuation (lockdown, hold and secure, etc.) , parents will be notified by phone or email as soon as it is safe to do so.

If you have any questions regarding the Aldershot's management policies and procedures, please speak to the Director / Designate of your program.

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### **Fire Drills**

The Child Care and Early Years Act require all licensed childcare programs to conduct fire drills a minimum of once per month. These drills are conducted at various times during the program take, in all seasons and weathers.

To ensure the safety of your child, we only release them to authorized people as indicated on your registration forms. If the educators do not recognize the person picking up your child, a Photo ID will be required. Any changes to the persons authorized to pick up your child must be provided to the educator and the Operations Director/Designate in writing.

### **Weather / Outdoor Play**

|                                  |                                                                                       |                                          |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
|                                  | <b>Winter Weather</b><br>(including wind chill) – with proper winter outdoor clothing |                                          |
| <b>Age Group</b>                 | <b>Temperature</b>                                                                    | <b>Duration of each Outdoor Playtime</b> |
| <b>Infants</b>                   | -5° C or warmer                                                                       | Full hour                                |
|                                  | - 5° C to -10° C                                                                      | Reduced outdoor time                     |
|                                  | Below – 10° C                                                                         | No outside time                          |
| <b>Toddler and<br/>Preschool</b> | - 10° C or warmer                                                                     | Full hour                                |
|                                  | - 10° C to -15° C                                                                     | Reduced outdoor time                     |
|                                  | Below-15° C                                                                           | No outside time                          |

|                                                                                                                                                       |                    |                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>Summer Weather</b><br>(including humidex) – Air Quality higher than `6` children will not go outside<br>UV higher `5` children will not go outside |                    |                                          |
| <b>Age Group</b>                                                                                                                                      | <b>Temperature</b> | <b>Duration of each Outdoor Playtime</b> |

|                |                |                      |
|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| All Age Groups | 30° C or below | Full hour            |
|                | 30° C to 40° C | Reduced outdoor time |
|                | 40° C or above | No outside time      |

## **Halton Inclusion Services – Acknowledgement of Support Services**

Aldershot childcare centre participates in **Halton Inclusion Services**, a partnership among **Halton Region, Community Living Burlington**, ( might be in future- **Community Living North Halton**, and **ErinoakKids**). This collaboration helps ensure that all children can actively participate and feel included within our program.

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### **Collaborative Support**

Families may notice **Resource Consultants, Occupational Therapists**, and **Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs)** visiting our centre. These professionals work alongside educators to observe classroom environments and provide strategies, tools, and training that support children’s overall development. The support they offer often benefits the group rather than individual children.

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### **Roles of Professionals**

- **Resource Consultants** monitor children’s growth and development, help educators plan based on children’s strengths and needs, support smooth transitions to school, and share resources and information with families and staff.
- **Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs)** support children’s participation in communication-based activities through gestures, sounds, pictures, or words.
- **Occupational Therapists (OTs)** assist educators in creating classroom setups and routines that promote independence, play, and participation in daily activities.

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### **Family Communication**

If it is determined that a child may benefit from additional individual support, families will be contacted directly by the educators or Director/Designate to discuss next steps before any further action is taken.

For any questions or additional information about inclusion services, please speak with the **Centre Supervisor or Director**.

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### **Parking Site Safety and Compliance**

At **Aldershot Child Care Centre**, children's safety is our top priority. We are committed to maintaining a secure environment that meets and exceeds all Ministry of Education health and safety requirements.

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#### **Temporary Safety Measures**

In response to the **Ministry of Education's Immediate Safety Measures (September 2025)**, we have installed **temporary barriers and pylons** around the perimeter of the centre. These are in place to restrict vehicle access near entrances, playgrounds, and program rooms, ensuring children's safety during arrival and departure times.

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#### **Ongoing Collaboration**

We continue to work closely with our **landlord** and the **Ministry of Education** to review and assess our site. As further direction is provided, we will implement any **additional or permanent safety improvements**, such as protective barriers, planters, or bollards, as required.

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#### **Commitment to Families**

Our centre will **follow all future ministry guidance** related to site safety and communicate any updates or changes promptly to families. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation as we work together to maintain a safe and welcoming environment for all children and families.

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